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Methamphetamine Fact Sheet

What is Meth?

- Meth is a powerful, highly addictive stimulant that impacts the central nervous system
- Meth causes temporary euphoria and increased energy for as long as 6 hours per high
- Side effects: brain damage, paranoia, violent behavior
- Methamphetamine is a Schedule II drug under the Controlled Substance Act
- Schedule II drugs have little medical use and a high potential for abuse (eg. cocaine and PCP)

Where does Meth come from?

- Meth is made illegally by combining over the counter cold medications with other household products
- A batch of meth can be made in just a few hours using ingredients purchased legally at a typical retailer
- Super meth labs once dominated the illegal production
- Small meth labs are now being found in houses, apartments, hotel rooms, and trailers

Risks from Meth

- Meth use causes brain damage and violent, psychotic behavior
- Meth users have mutilated and killed their own children
- Meth addicts turn to crime and prostitution to support their habit
- Production of meth in homes exposes users, children, and first responders to toxic gases and hazardous chemicals
- Due to the flammable nature of the chemicals used in cooking meth, fires and explosions are common

Arizona Experience with the Meth Clandestine Lab Problem

- 1,263 meth production related seizures were made in Arizona over the past four years
- Over 1,400 meth related arrests were made in Arizona over the past four years
- 362 children were rescued from meth labs over the past four years
- Disposal costs for gross contamination associated with meth labs was nearly \$4 million over the past four years

Arizona Drug Endangered Children Cases

- A total of 139 cases involving 268 children were investigated by law enforcement and CPS since the Meth & Kids Initiative was started in 2000
- CPS took 81 percent (218) of the children into temporary custody at the crime scene
- 85 percent of children were placed in foster homes
- About 30-35 percent of labs seized are residences with children
- In Arizona, between 2000 and 2002, 33 percent of children found at meth labs tested positive for meth

Effects of Meth and Other Illegal Drug Manufacturing on Children

- Children face a host of hazards when there is meth or a meth lab in their home
 - Exposed to toxic chemicals that can cause serious health problems, including chemical burns, respiratory problems, and lung and tissue damage
 - Experience developmental delay and even brain toxicity
- Prenatal exposure to meth results in infants that are six times more likely to be born with birth defects such as spina bifida, club foot, intestinal abnormalities, and skeletal abnormalities
- A 2002 study found that 60 percent of children found at meth labs tested positive for meth in their system
- In Mesa County, CO, a study of children removed from meth labs found:
 - 50 percent had learning disabilities
 - 90 percent were reliant on inhalers
- Meth-making chemicals can catch fire, explode, or create clouds of toxic gas that injure children
- A 2002 study found that 60 percent of children found at meth labs tested positive for meth in their system
- Meth cookers often have guns, other weapons and booby-traps to protect their drugs and labs. These weapons pose a serious safety risk for children in the home
- Justice Department statistics show that neglected or abused children are
 - 50 percent more likely to be arrested as juveniles
 - 40 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime as adults and
 - 33 percent more likely to be substance abusers

Meth Is Poisoning Children in Homes Across America

- Children live in 50 percent of Minnesota drug lab homes
- In one Minnesota county, a meth-addicted baby is born every week
- Nearly half of children in one Washington county are in temporary state custody because their parents are involved with meth
- In one Idaho county, 90 percent of kids in foster homes have meth addicted parents
- In Riverside County, CA, a three year study of meth lab cases revealed:
 - 95 percent of children found had no provisions at home
 - 95 percent were not immunized to prevent illness
 - The average age of children found was 7.6 years old
- In 2002, 54 percent of children evaluated for possible exposure to chemicals or drugs due to meth labs by the Utah DEC Medical Advisory Team tested positive for narcotics in their system

Clean-Up and First Responders

- 20 to 30 percent of all meth labs are discovered due to explosion
- 51 percent of all injuries at meth labs happen to first responders, according to the Center for Disease and Control
- It is estimated that every pound of methamphetamine produced leaves behind 5-7 pounds of toxic waste

Precursor Chemicals

- Precursor chemical laws have been credited in reducing the number of meth lab seizures in Oklahoma by 80 percent
- The typical meth lab cooker produces 48 to 72 times a year, creating the possibility for caustic and explosive reactions each time
- Over the course of a year, the typical methamphetamine cook will teach at least ten others how to make meth

Meth Use Nationally

- 9.6 million US residents 12 and older used meth once in their lifetime
- 338,000 12-17 years old used meth once in their lifetime
- 1.5 million 18-25 years old used meth once in their lifetime
- 919 meth labs in rural areas in 1998 - - 9,385 meth labs in rural areas in 2003
- The typical meth cooker produces 48 to 72 times a year, creating the possibility for fire and explosions each time
- Over the course of a year, the typical meth cook will teach at least ten others how to make meth